



USER'S GUIDE TO THE HERNDON ZONING ORDINANCE

29. Exterior Lighting Standards

(see Zoning Ordinance §78-515, *Performance Standards*, paragraph (I), *Exterior Lighting Standards*)

The Town of Herndon zoning ordinance User Guide series provides the public with general information on land use regulations affecting activities undertaken by the public and administered by the Herndon Department of Community Development. It is not intended to be a complete statement of all applicable regulations. Individuals are encouraged to contact the Department of Community Development at 703-787-7380 for complete permitting requirements.

How does the Town Regulate Lighting?

Most sites are required to provide adequate lighting levels to provide security for people and property. However, such lighting usually must be arranged and shielded to confine and direct light entirely within the boundary line of the site. For commercial, industrial and multi-family properties, the Town regulates the intensity of the light, the height at which it may be mounted, and the direction of the light. In some cases, the Town may also regulate the type of lighting fixture.

Is Lighting Restricted on Residential Property?

Yes. While the most stringent standards apply to nonresidential uses, the Town does restrict the maximum illumination on a residential property to one half a foot candle at the property line, and five foot candles within the property line. A foot candle is a unit of measure of the intensity of light falling on a surface, equal to one lumen per square foot and originally defined with reference to a standardized candle burning at one foot from a given surface.

When there is concern about excessive lighting on a property, a Town inspector would visit the site and, using a light meter, would determine if the lighting levels are within the Town's regulations.

How is Lighting Restricted on Commercial Properties?

Detailed information is contained in zoning ordinance §78-515(I), *Exterior Lighting Standards* where specific standards are given for:

- ✍ Hours of illumination
- ✍ Fixtures
- ✍ Illumination direction
- ✍ Maximum lighting height
- ✍ Shielding
- ✍ Maximum light levels
- ✍ Direction of lighting
- ✍ Distance from property line
- ✍ Hue
- ✍ Wall-mounted lights
- ✍ Floodlights and spotlights
- ✍ Wall pack lights
- ✍ Illumination of outdoor sports fields and performance areas

Any development proposed within the Town is subject to the Town's exterior lighting standards and requires detailed review through a site plan review process. As part of the site plan, the Town staff reviews a professionally prepared site lighting plan. The Town requests the following information on a site lighting plan:

1. Description of all luminaires (location, output and type) and the method of fixture mounting, output (distribution patterns), and mounting height above grade;
2. maintained horizontal footcandle values at a distance of three feet above the ground, with grid spacing no greater than 15 feet covering the entire site and adjacent areas. The off-site data will permit analysis of shielding effects when shielded lighting is placed near the site boundaries.
3. Detail sheet showing poles and fixtures, and whether poles are foundation-mounted or direct burial; as well as detail for fixtures mounted on buildings.
4. Detail of shielding devices and methods, as well as the distribution patterns for each type of shielding.

<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 5. Statements on the plan sheet that: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a. Sodium vapor luminaries shall not be used for site lighting; b. All direct light rays from site lighting fixtures shall be confined entirely within the boundary line of the site. 6. Spillage of indirect light onto adjacent residential properties of 0.1 foot candles or less, or 1.0 foot candles or less for other uses, measured at the boundary line of the site. 7. Commercial property light fixtures that do exceed 20 feet above grade where visible from residential properties. 8. Residential property light fixtures that are no more than 14 feet above grade. 9. Product cut sheets and individual distribution patterns (may be submitted when information is known.) 	<p>In general, lighting affixed to the walls of buildings is difficult to control with respect to confining light rays to the site and should not be used to illuminate large areas of the site.</p> <p>Light proposals for sites inside the Heritage Preservation Overlay District will require review by and approval from the Heritage Preservation Review Board for light fixtures (poles and luminaries.) Styles must be compatible with other site elements and with Town policies, such as the Village Streets standards. Lighting proposals for commercial sites in an Architectural Control District (generally, outside of the Heritage Preservation Overlay District) will require review by and approval from the Architectural Review Board.</p>
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Need more information?

Got a question on required performance guarantees, the application process, or the financial requirements? Call or make an appointment to see a member of the staff in the **Department of Community Development at 703-787-7380**.

Have a question regarding building permits or construction codes? Call or make an appointment to see the **Building Official at 703-435-6850**.

Visit the Town of Herndon on the web at www.herndon-va.gov for the Zoning Ordinance User Guide series or to access the Town Code. Town offices are located at the Herndon Municipal Center at 777 Lynn Street, Herndon, Virginia, 20170.

User's Guide to the Zoning Ordinance Series

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